onion through state owned agencies. Government has designated the Karnataka State Agricultural Produce Processing and Export Corporation Ltd. (KAPPEC), Bangalore as well as the Karnataka State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd. (KSCMF), Bangalore as the canalising agencies for export of onion and has been allocating specific quotas to them for export of onion. For the period 9.2.2000 till 31.3.2000, KAPPEC and KSCMF each have been allowed to export 2500 MTs of all varieties of onions either directly or through registered exporters.

Competitiveness of Developing Countries

1090. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) while addressing the partnership summit organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry, he called for resisting any attempts by the World Trade Organization to kill the competitiveness of the developing countries by interfering in non-trade activities, asking the WTO to confine itself to trade issues only; and

(b) if so, what precise concerns of the developing countries were voiced by him?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) While addressing the Partnership Summit-2000 organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on January 10, 2000, it was urged that WTO should be given a much narrower, trade-oriented remit. It was emphasised that WTO should be confined to trade issues only as many of the non-trade related issues, like core labour standards were sought to be introduced into the WTO's agenda by the developed countries only as protectionist devices, with a view to curb the comparative advantage of the developing countries. It was also impressed that non-trade issues can be properly addressed by the appropriate international institutions, like International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the case of labour standards, as they are more competent and better equipped to handle these issues than WTO.

(b) It has been emphasised at various fora that WTO should first redress the concerns on "Implementation Issues" as have been raised by India along with other developing countries in the preparatory process to the Third WTO Ministerial Conference. These "Implementation Issues" relate to:

(i) the imbalances and inequities inherent in some of the WTO Agreements; (ii) non-realization of expected benefits through WTO Agreements pertaining to subjects such as Agriculture and Textiles, (iii) operationalization into contractual obligations of the Special and Differential treatment provisions in favour of developing countries. It has been also stressed that WTO agreement have already provided for mandated negotiations and mandated reviews which by themselves along with Implementation Issues constitute a fairly large agenda and that there is no need to further overburden the WTO agenda with non-trade related issues.

Extension of Transport Subsidy Scheme

1091. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the transport subsidy scheme aimed at helping industrialisation of hilly, remote and inaccessible areas of the country is shortly coming to an end;

(b) if so, whether Government would extend the scheme; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) (a) The Transport Subsidy Scheme introduced in July, 1971 is valid up to 31.3.2007 for the States in the North-Eastern region. For other regions i.e. the States of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, eight hill districts of Uttar Pradesh, the district of Darjeeling in West Bengal, Union Territories of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep, it is valid up to 31.3.2000.

(b) The proposal for further extension of the scheme in respect of the States/Union Territories where the scheme is presently valid up to 31.3.2000, is under consideration of the Government.

(c) Does not arise.

Industries set up in Maharashtra

1092. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of industries set up, in private and public sector, in Maharashtra during the period from 1992 to 1999, alongwith the locations thereof;